

ROCKRIDGE POND

In 1926, the Town of Wellesley purchased 4.36 acres of land around most of Rockridge Pond in the residential Cliff Estates section of Wellesley. This pond, nestled among the trees is 2.1 acres in size and has 1,850 feet of shoreline. The passive recreation activities on this piece of public open space, consists of fishing, ice skating and hiking.

The woods are classified as a mixed deciduous upland forest. The major trees consist of: Red Maple, White Pine, American Elm, Tupelo and Sweet Birch. A substantial portion of the site is classified as a deciduous wooded swamp. Plants growing in these areas are: Red Maple, Sweet Pepperbush, Highbush Blueberry, Swamp Fern, Jewelweed, Royal Fern, Sensitive Fern and Cinnamon Fern. There is also a small shrub swamp containing: Sweet Pepperbush, Highbush Blueberry and Speckled Alder. Beside the pond is an emergent marsh community of plants including: Sedges, Water Hemlock, Clover, Plantain, Aster, Beggar's Ticks, and Path Rush.

The wildlife at Rockridge Pond is also quite diverse. Fish in the pond consists of: carp, bullhead, sunfish, large mouth bass and silver bass. Songbirds that nest in the area include: black capped chickadee, tufted titmouse and white breasted nuthatch. Nesting waterfowl include mallards, Canada geese, and great blue heron. There are many reptiles such as: garter snakes, painted and snapping turtles, pickerel, green and leopard frogs and spring peepers. The evidence indicates the following animals make a home at Rockridge Pond: cottontail rabbit, squirrels, mice, voles, shrew, raccoon and muskrat.

Much of the site also contains extensive areas of exposed bedrock. The pond was lowered and cleaned in 1936, according to Town records. Efforts to dredge the pond were also begun. In 1939, a leak in the dam required some repairs. Currently, the pond contains a substantial amount of sediment accumulation. The pond is now only 3 1/2 feet at its' deepest point with the average depth being 2 feet. Eutrophication and oxygen depletion have led to fishkills. A plan to dredge the pond would remove 10 feet of sediment from the deepest points and 2 feet from the majority of the pond.

The lovely site and diversity of wildlife and plants, make Rockridge Pond a valuable asset to the Wellesley environment.